MINUTES of the TOWN COUNCIL MEETING of the SWANSCOMBE & GREENHITHE TOWN COUNCIL held via ZOOM on THURSDAY 8 APRIL 2021 at 7.00 PM

PRESENT:
Councillor Lesley Howes – Town Mayor
Councillor Anita Barham – Deputy Town Mayor
Councillor Emma Ben-Moussa
Councillor Sue Butterfill
Councillor Lorna Cross
Councillor Ann Duke
Councillor Linda Hall
Councillor Dr Jo Harman
Councillor Peter Harman
Councillor Peter Harris
Councillor John Hayes
Councillor Maurice Weet

ALSO PRESENT:
Graham Blew – Town Clerk
Martin Harding – Assistant Town Clerk/RFO
X1 Members of the Public

ABSENT:
There were none

262/20-21. **ARRANGEMENTS AND CONSTRAINTS REGARDING FILMING OR RECORDING THE MEETING.**

The Town Mayor explained the arrangements and constraints relating to the filming or recording of the meeting.

263/20-21. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Jay Shah, due to an emergency work commitment.

An apology for absence was received from Dartford Borough Councillor (Greenhithe) David Mote who had provided a written report which would be read out at agenda item 19.

RESOLVED:

That the reason for absence, for the above Town Councillor, be formally accepted and approved.

264/20-21. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

Councillor Sue Butterfill declared a prejudicial interest in agenda item 24, Gravesham Community Leisure Limited (GCLL) – Update and Request, as she is a Director of GCLL.

Councillor Ann Duke declared a prejudicial interest in agenda item 20, COVID-19 Financial Implications, as she is the Chief Executive Officer of Walk Tall.

As per Standing Order 34 c) the Chairman adjourned the meeting at this point to allow members of the public to address the meeting in relation to the business being transacted at the meeting.

265/20-21. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 MARCH 2021.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 March 2021 be confirmed as a true record and be signed outside of this meeting.

266/20-21. ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND THEIR POSITION ON THE AGENDA.

The Town Clerk advised members that an email had been received, via the Member of Parliaments office, from Mr Dennis Hagger and Mrs Maureen Hagger congratulating the Town Council on completing 40 years as a Town Council. Mr Hagger had been the first Town Mayor in 1981 – 1982. The Town Clerk was asked to thank Mr and Mrs Hagger for their email and continued interest in the Town Council.

267/20-21. LOCAL POLICE - MONTHLY UPDATE

Members were provided with February's monthly update.

RESOLVED:

That the information be noted.

268/20-21. SPECIAL PANDEMIC HERO AWARD.

Further to minute 20/20-21, members considered the nominations received for the Special Pandemic Hero Award 2020 – 2021.

Following discussion members agreed:

RESOLVED:

1. That the x 4 nominations all receive the Special Pandemic Hero Award.
2. That the winners are all presented with the award at the Annual Open Town Meeting.
3. That the proposed design be used for the winner's certificate.

269/20-21. ACCESS ROAD GULLIES – SWANSCOMBE CENTRE.

The access road to the side of the Swanscombe Centre serves several community facilities including the Swanscombe Centre itself, Craylands Lane allotments and Swanscombe Heritage Park.

The drains / gullies within the road are blocked and during heavy rain cause extensively flood the vicinity.

Initial investigations works had been undertaken to both attempt to clear the blockage and ascertain the route of the drain and the works required to remedy the problem.

Members considered the quotation received from e Town Council had obtained a quotation to excavate the soft ground and install two new pipes from the gullies to the storm drain at a cost of £3,375.00+VAT.

Members were advised that initially x2 companies had undertaken investigatory works but only one had been able to quote to undertake the repair works.

RESOLVED:

That, in accordance with Financial Regulations 11.1 (d) and 11.1 (i) the works be undertaken and that this be paid for from the monies currently held in the Community Infrastructure Levy budget.

270/20-21. ADDITIONAL BENCHES – SWANSCOMBE & BROOMFIELD PARKS.

The Town Council had received a request asking whether benches could be installed outside the play areas, to enable parents with dogs to sit and watch whilst their children play.

Members were made aware that as no budget has been allocated for this the cost would have to be met from the monies currently held in the Community Infrastructure Levy budget.

RESOLVED:

That x2 additional benches be installed, as indicated in the report, and that these be paid for from the monies currently held in the Community Infrastructure Levy budget.

271/20-21. BOOT SCRAPERS – SWANSCOMBE HERITAGE PARK.

The Town Council had received a request asking whether x2 boot scrapers could be installed at the two walking entrances to the Swanscombe Heritage Park.

Members were made aware that as no budget has been allocated for this the cost would have to be met from the monies currently held in the Community Infrastructure Levy budget.

After being proposed, duly seconded, and being put to a vote it was agreed:

RESOLVED:

That x2 additional boot scrapers be installed, as indicated in the report, and that these be paid for from the monies currently held in the Community Infrastructure Levy budget.

272/20-21. TREE WORKS & REPLACEMENT TREES – SWANSCOMBE PARK.

As part of the works agreed within the 2019 tree survey, the large Leylandii in the corner of the bowls green at Swanscombe Park was scheduled to be felled. These works had been delayed due to the pandemic and had now been scheduled for October 2021 to ensure that any works do not impact on the wildlife and nesting season.

When the decision was made to fell this tree, the decision was made to plant x 2 trees, at a more suitable location within the park, to replace it. Members considered the advice on the replacement trees supplied by the tree specialist (ARB Approved Contractor).

The opportunity to engage with the Planet Dartford project from Dartford Borough Council (DBC) was raised, to fund the trees to plant a community orchard. Councillor Butterfill offered to contact DBC on this.

Following lengthy discussion, it was resolved:

RESOLVED:

1. That the delay to the felling of the Leylandii tree be noted.
2. That the Town Council purchase two fruit trees (x 1 Apple and x 1 Pear) to be planted within a community orchard as replacements for the felled Leylandii.
3. That Councillor Butterfill contact the DBC Planet Dartford to see if they would be able to assist with any funding or planting of additional trees for the community orchard.

273/20-21. COMMEMORATIVE BENCHES.

Members considered a suggestion to dedicate the new benches, planned to be installed within the new picnic area in Swanscombe Park, to those who had lost their lives during the COVID – 19 pandemic and / or to those key workers who went above and beyond to serve our community.

Following discussion, it was resolved:

RESOLVED:

1. That x 2 plaques be installed on the previously agreed new benches within the picnic area at Swanscombe Park.
2. That the plaques would dedicate the benches to those who had lost their lives during the COVID – 19 pandemic and to those key workers who went above and beyond to serve our community.
3. That an item be placed on the agenda for the next Town Council meeting to discuss other locations for benches that could be dedicated in this manner.

274/20-21. VE DAY 2021 – TOMMY SILHOUETTES.

Members discussed the possibility of purchasing tommy silhouettes to be used to commemorate VE Day 2021.

Members were made aware that as no budget has been allocated for this the cost would have to be met from the monies currently held in the Community Infrastructure Levy budget.

RESOLVED:

1. That x1 Tommy Silhouettes be purchased and that this is paid for from the monies currently held in the Community Infrastructure Levy budget.
2. That the Tommy Silhouette be installed as indicated within the report to commemorate VE Day, VJ Day and Remembrance Day.
3. That the flag schedule, previously agreed at minute 240/20-21, be amended to include raising the Union flag to commemorate VJ Day.

275/20-21. NEW NOTICEBOARD – THE AVENUE GREENHITHE.

The Town Council had been approached by Dartford Borough Council (DBC) asking whether it would like to place a community noticeboard on a piece of land they had recently renovated along The Avenue, Greenhithe.

Members were made aware that as no budget has been allocated for this the cost would have to be met from the monies currently held in the Community Infrastructure Levy budget.

RESOLVED:

That the Town Council thank DBC for the offer to place a noticeboard at the land along The Avenue, Greenhithe, but would decline the offer as this was not felt to be the right location.

276/20-21. NATURAL ENGLAND CONSULTATION – SWANSCOMBE PENINSULA.

Members had previously been provided with a letter from Natural England, along with supporting documents, indicating the enlargement of the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) at Bakers Hole, Swanscombe, to encompass the wider Swanscombe Peninsula area. The deadline for responses wase by 12 July 2021.

RESOLVED:

That the response as detailed be submitted**.**

277/20-21. STAFF / MEMBER TRAINING UPDATE.

The following training had been scheduled / undertaken: -

Town Clerk	SLCC Annual General Meeting (Zoom)	17 March 2021
Town Clerk	KALC Press & Social Media Course (Zoom)	21 April 2021
Assistant Town Clerk	KALC Crowdfunding Event (Zoom)	17 March 2021
Assistant Town Clerk	IDOX Funding Webinar (Zoom)	24 March 2021
Assistant Town Clerk	Breakthrough Comms – Crisis Communications Webinar (Zoom)	31 March 2021

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

278/20-21. ANNUAL SAFETY INSPECTION OF PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT.

Members were issued with the report on the Annual Playground Safety Inspection, showing most of the risk criteria ratings indicated L (low) or VL (very low)

As well as the items requiring consideration the report also highlighted some equipment may require replacing in the future and Members were asked to take this into account when setting the annual estimates for next year (2022-2023)

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted and the works highlighted agreed to be undertaken using the budget allocations as detailed in the report.

279/20-21. DECISIONS & RESPONSES.

Members were provided with the decisions and planning responses using the previously approved delegated authority, under Section 101(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, during the period of lockdown and since the previous meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the decisions and planning responses using the previously approved delegated authority, under Section 101(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, during the period of lockdown, and since the previous meeting, be noted and endorsed.

280/20-21. REPORTS OF OUTSIDE REPRESENTATIVES.

Members were advised that this item provided an opportunity for Members' appointed as representatives on outside bodies to provide a report at the meeting.

<u>London Resort Company Holdings Ltd Community Liaison Group (LRCHCLG).</u>
Councillor Peter Harman is the Town Councils representative on the LRCHCLG. As previously agreed, the Agenda for the 9 March 2021 meeting was available for inspection.

The LRCHCL had confirmed that a substitute could attend meetings but that this must be done in advance with the substitutes contact details being provided.

<u>North West Kent Volunteer Centre (NWKVC).</u>
Councillor Sue Butterfill is the Town Councils representative on the NWKVC and provided an update which included: That the centre had moved to its new home in Fawkham and work was well underway on the gardening support projects. The minibus services were resuming following the vaccination of all drivers and safety protocols being put in place.

Ingress Park (Greenhithe) Management Limited (IPGM).
IPGM had indicated that, although unable to provide documentation, they would like to submit verbal updates to the Town Council.

Councillors' Peter Harman and Peter Harris are the Council's representatives on IPGM.

Councillor Peter Harris gave an update which included: That work was continuing from the recent tree survey, repairs to the follies and repairs to the fence within the Heritage Trail. Some of the spring bulbs recently planted had not flowered and the company who provided them had offered to provide further bulbs as a means of compensation. Crest had been approached and it was hoped to hold the September AGM in the Ingress Pak Community Centre.

281/20-21 REPORT FROM DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCILLORS.

The Dartford Borough Councillors reported on the following matters:

Feedback was provided which included:

A newly appointed Street Cleaner for Swanscombe appeared to be having a positive impact on the roads being cleaned. This trial was being regularly monitored.

Liaison work was still being undertaken to try and resolve the issue of anti-social car racing around Crossways Boulevard.

To enable it to be undertaken virtually the Annual General Meeting of the Council would now be held on 28 April 2021.

Plans were being worked on for ways in which meetings would be undertaken when the regulations covering online and virtual meetings ceased, currently 6 May 2021.

A project had begun to install 450 new smoke and fire sensors within residents' homes.

Most of the summer activities had been cancelled but normal services were continuing.

Planet Dartford had recently planted two new orchards in Alamein Gardens and Hesketh Park.

Charges were due to resume for on street parking, with off street parking to remain free for the time being.

Following the creation of 86 new council homes in Temple Hill, work was continuing at the sites in Gilbert Close, Milton Road, Mead Crescent and Keary Road.

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

Having already declared a prejudicial interest Councillor Ann Duke left the meeting and took no part in the discussion or decision of the following item.

282/20-21. COVID 19 - FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS.

Members considered the report which detailed the financial implication for the Town Council because of the Covid 19 pandemic.

Members discussed the continuation of the daily cleaning of children play areas and when this should come to an end.

RESOLVED:

1. That the information contained be noted.
2. That notice be served on the contractor undertaking the play area cleaning to end the contract from 21 June 2021 in line with the removal of social distancing restrictions.

283/20-21. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR / HYGEINE CONCERNS – MANOR PARK, SWANSCOMBE.

Members considered the report which focussed on a particular issue that was repeatedly being experienced in the Manor Park area.

RESOLVED:

That the situation be monitored, and the Dartford Borough Councillor Emma Ben Moussa contact the Community Support Unit at DBC regarding the use of cameras in this area.

284/20-21. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC.

MOVED BY Councillor Linda Hall and seconded by Councillor Lesley Howes.

RESOLVED:

That, pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press leave the meeting during consideration of the following item(s).

No members of the press or public were present during discussion of the following items of business.

Having already declared a prejudicial interest Councillor Sue Butterfill left the meeting and took no part in the discussion or decision of the following item.

285/20-21. GRAVESHAM COMMUNITY LEISURE LIMITED (GCLL) – UPDATE.

Members discussed the contents of the update.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

286/20-21. PAVILION COMMUNITY SPORTS AND SOCIAL CLUB – UPDATE.

Members discussed the contents of the update.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

287/20-21. GROVE HALL WORKING GROUP.

The Working Group met on 5 March 2021. Members considered the confidential notes and recommendations from that Working Group.

RESOLVED:

That the recommendations in the report from the Working Group be agreed and endorsed.

288/20-21. WORKING GROUPS REVIEW.

Members considered the confidential report for this item.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Café Working Group be disbanded.
2. That the Pavilion Working Group set its Terms of Reference at its next meeting.

There being no further business to transact the Meeting closed at 9.15pm.

Signed: _____ Date:- _____
(Chairman)